

AUDIT PROCEDURES GUIDELINES

There are many types of audit procedures which can be used to test transactions or processes. The audit objective determines the type of procedure to be used. The auditor must judge the evidence obtained through the audit procedures to make conclusions for each audit objective. The evaluation process requires professional judgment in determining the adequacy, efficiency, economy and effectiveness of what has been audited. The evaluation process is facilitated by the use of the "Finding Development Sheet". (Procedure No. [5-07G](#))

Care must be taken in selecting the correct procedure to achieve the audit objective. The audit risks include: selecting an improper audit procedure, executing the procedure incorrectly, and incorrect evaluations.

The following general types of audit procedures are discussed below: **Verification, Observation, Inquiry, and Analysis.**

A. Verification

Verification is the confirmation of things such as: Assets; Records; Statements; Documents; Compliance With laws and regulations; Effectiveness of internal controls; Transactions; and Processes. The purpose of verification is to establish the accuracy, reliability or validity of something. Following is a discussion of types of verification techniques:

1. **Count:** An auditor will use this technique to verify the accounting records of a physical asset by physically counting the assets.
2. **Compare:** An auditor will identify similar and/or different characteristics of information from two or more sources. Types of comparison include: (a) Comparison with prescribed standards; (b) Comparison of current operations with past or similar operations; (c) Comparison with written policies and procedures; (d) Comparison with laws or regulations; and (e) Comparison with other reasonable criteria.

Specific examples are:

- To compare a law requiring that a percentage of taxes will be used for a particular program with the accounting records showing the amount of taxes and how much was spent on the program.
 - To compare the documentation of a transaction with the procedure for the transaction.
3. **Examine:** To look something over carefully, such as a document, especially for the purpose of detecting flaws or irregularities. For example, an auditor may examine a document to verify that it has been executed by authorized persons.
 4. **Inspect:** To look something over carefully, such as a physical asset, especially for the purpose of detecting flaws or irregularities. For example, an auditor may inspect inventory to verify quality.
 5. **Foot:** To recompute the mathematical result of addition or subtraction of columns or rows of numbers in documents or records.
 6. **Recompute:** To check mathematical computations performed by others.
 7. **Reconcile:** The process of matching two independent sets of records and to show mathematically, with supporting documentation, the difference between the two records. For example, the beginning and ending balances in an account could be reconciled to document the transactions that account for the changes between the beginning and the end.

8. **Confirm:** To obtain information from an independent source (third party) for the purpose of verifying information.
9. **Vouch:** To verify recorded transactions or amounts by examining supporting documents. In vouching, the direction of testing is from the recorded item to supporting documentation. The purpose for vouching is to verify that recorded transactions represent actual transactions.
10. **Trace:** Tracing procedures begin with the original documents and are followed through the processing cycles into summary accounting records. In tracing, the direction of testing is from supporting documentation to the recorded item. The purpose of tracing is to verify that all actual transactions have been recorded.

B. Observation

Observation is auditors seeing with a purpose, making mental notes and using judgment to measure what they see against standards in their minds. Experienced auditors may be better able to observe deviations from the norm. Observed deviations usually require confirmation through analysis or corroboration.

Types of deficient conditions which can be observed include:

1. Idle personnel, equipment, or facilities;
2. Security violations;
3. Dangerous conditions or safety violations; and
4. Backlogs.

C. Inquiry

Auditors perform interviews with the auditee and related parties throughout the audit. Good oral communication skills on the part of the auditor assist in getting accurate and meaningful information from the interviewee. Auditors should use open-ended questions when possible. Depending on the type of information received in an interview, it may need to be confirmed through documentation.

D. Analysis

Analysis is the separation of an entity for the purpose of studying the individual parts of data. The elements of the entity can be isolated, identified, quantified, and measured. The quantification may require the auditor to perform detailed calculations and computations. Furthermore, the auditor can document ratios and trends, make comparisons and isolate unusual transactions or conditions.